

Research Article

A new species of the genus *Hemidactylus* Goldfuss, 1820 (Squamata: Gekkonidae) from Tamil Nadu, India

Amit Sayyed^{1*}, Samson Kirubakaran^{1,3}, Rahul Khot², Omkar Adhikari², Ayaan Sayyed^{1,4}, Masum Sayyed^{1,4}, Jayaditya Purkayastha^{1,5}, Shubhankar Deshpande^{1,6}, Shauri Sulakhe^{1,6}

¹ Wildlife Protection and Research Society (WLPRS), Maharashtra, India

² Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

³ Department of Rural Development Science, Arul Anandar college, karumathur, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India 62551

⁴ Podar International School, Satara, Maharashtra, India

⁵ Help Earth, 16, RNC Path, Lachitnagar, Guwahati 781007, Assam, India

⁶ InSearch Environmental Solutions (IES), Flat No:1, Omkar apartment, Kothrud, Pune, India

*Corresponding Author's E-mail: amitsayyedsatara@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

We describe a new species of *Hemidactylus* Goldfuss, 1820 based on morphological and molecular evidence from Madurai district, Tamil Nadu India. The new species shows a divergence of 8.5–30.9% on the ND2 gene from the congeners and was recovered as a member of the *Hemidactylus acanthopholis* Mirza & Sanap, 2014 sub-clade from the *Hemidactylus prashadi* Smith, 1935 clade. Further, the new species can be distinguished from other members of the *H. acanthopholis* sub-clade by having non-overlapping morphological characters and unique dorsal scalation. The distinguishing characteristics of the new species include medium body size, the number of dorsal tubercle rows at mid-body, the number of enlarged tubercles in paravertebral rows, the number of femoral pores and poreless scales separating the left and right series on the femoral-precloacal row in males, and the number of ventral scales across the belly at mid-body.

Key words: *Hemidactylus acanthopholis* sub-clade, Peninsular India, taxonomy, ND2 gene

